



# Mount Calvary Connected

November 24, 2021

*Mount Calvary Connected is a weekly newsletter sent out at the end of each week. Our goal is to keep you connected to your church and your faith with messages from our pastors, information about upcoming activities at Mt. Calvary and more!*

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## LIVE STREAMING WORSHIP SERVICE INFORMATION

Mt. Calvary hosts live broadcasts of the liturgy at 8:45 AM Sunday mornings. The broadcast can be heard by tuning your radio to 88.3 FM if you are near the church. We also stream these services live over the internet. Simply visit [www.mt-calvarylutheran.org](http://www.mt-calvarylutheran.org) and click "Live Radio Broadcast" from the home page on Sunday mornings.

Weekly worship bulletins can be found at: [www.mt-calvarylutheran.org/bulletins/](http://www.mt-calvarylutheran.org/bulletins/)

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## A Message from Pastor Jonathan

The name Sarah Josepha Hale may not ring a bell for many of you, but I can guarantee that her work has impacted your life.

Born October 24, 1788 in Newport, New Hampshire, Sarah was the daughter of Gordon and Martha Buell. Sarah grew up in the days when our country was still in its adolescence, her own father having served as a Captain in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War.

And it was her father who felt so strongly that his daughter should have the same education as his sons. And when those opportunities didn't exist, he ensured that his wife and sons would homeschool young Sarah. Being an extremely intelligent young woman she even learned many things without the benefit of a teacher at all.

In the year 1811, Sarah's father opened a tavern in her hometown, and it was there that the now 23-year-old school teacher met her husband David Hale. Together, they had five children before David suffered a stroke, leaving her a widow at age 34.

As would be expected, Sarah's life changed after the loss of her husband, and according to various accounts, she would wear only black for the rest of her life. But it was in those days after his death that she turned her attention to writing, and for almost half a century she worked as an author and magazine editor, with a focus on women's issues. But, arguably her most influential work is actually a simple children's nursery rhyme; in May of 1830, Sarah Josepha Hale, wrote a poem, entitled "Mary Had a Little Lamb." A poem that lives on in homes and preschools across the world.

But, it's actually probably Sarah's second most influential work that is of relevance today.

In 1837, in her magazine, Godey's Ladies' Book, she first wrote an editorial calling for a national day of thanksgiving. At the time, Thanksgiving was celebrated throughout the New England states, but did not have a wide appeal across the country, nor did it have a single unified date.

Five years later, in 1842, she wrote about thanksgiving yet again, calling for people across the country to give thanks for what they have, considering that there were others in the world far less fortunate.

And then, Sarah wrote an editorial each year for twenty years straight, calling for the nation to come together on a single day to give thanks to God for all with which we've been blessed.

And she was so deeply invested in the cause, she wrote not only editorials, but personal letters to each new president, including Zachary Taylor, Millard Fillmore, Franklin Pierce, and James Buchanan. Each letter was, for the most part ignored, despite a growing movement throughout the country.

It was not until 1863, that one of those letters finally was finally answered in the form of proclamation issued on behalf of President Abraham Lincoln:

"The year that is drawing towards its close, has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added, which are of so extraordinary a nature, that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever watchful providence of Almighty God."

The nation was midway through the Civil War, but President Lincoln felt that it was proper to hear the prophetic voice of Sarah Josepha Hale and dedicate a national day to give thanks for what we have.

While our traditions of Thanksgiving may revolve around stories of pilgrims and Native Americans, we likely owe it to a single feisty widow that we are able to celebrate the holiday together.

One hundred and fifty-eight years after President Lincoln first declared the last Thursday in November as a national day of thanks, we prepare to give thanks ourselves.

We give thanks for the ways in which God has blessed us and our families and our community. And we give thanks for the hope that we have in Jesus Christ.

Through all sorts of ups and downs, Sarah Josepha Hale tirelessly dedicated a large chunk of her life to promoting the idea that we should pause together to give thanks for that which God has given us.

And so, as we approach the much celebrated last Thursday in November, with thoughts of turkey, and family, parades and football on our minds, let's take that pause, and give thanks for all the ways that God has blessed us, in times of plenty and in times of strife, knowing that God will always provide for God's children. Happy Thanksgiving!

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Jonathan

### **Adult Sunday School**

Adult Sunday School is ongoing! We were happy to see some new faces and hope that even more join us! We meet in the conference room/library each Sunday after worship.

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### **Upcoming Meetings**

Evangelism Committee: December 9th at 6:30 p.m.

Property Committee: December 9th at 6:30 p.m.

Social Ministry Committee: December 9th at 6:30 p.m.

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### **Help Wanted**

The Property Committee is looking to recruit a number of small job volunteers. Tasks might include replacing light bulbs, changing hardware on a commode, getting a lawnmower or snowblower ready for use, etc. The Committee believes we have a lot of talent in the congregation and wants to make greater use of it. Every small job handled by a member equals one less call that needs to be made to a vendor who may have a minimum visit charge or an hourly rate of \$50 or more.

Interested parties should contact Mark Rychak or one of the pastors. A message could also be left with the church office at 814-266-4859. Thank you!

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### **Scheduled Worship Help**

#### **Saturday, November 27:**

**Greeters/Ushers:** Todd Moss & Deb Rychak - **Communion Assistants:** Cindy Buday & Debbie Ferrin

#### **Sunday, November 28:**

**Greeters/Ushers:** Volunteers needed! - **Communion Assistants:** Ray Leverknight

#### **Saturday, December 4:**

**Greeters/Ushers:** Volunteers needed! - **Communion Assistants:** Bill & Jan Layton

#### **Sunday, December 5:**

**Greeters/Ushers:** Volunteers needed! - **Communion Assistants:** Volunteers needed!

There are sign up sheets in the Narthex for Greeters/Ushers and Communion Assistants. Please sign up for the dates that would suit you best. We appreciate you volunteering. If you have questions about these roles, please contact Christine Koshute at [814-421-4921](tel:814-421-4921) or Chris Oleksa at [814-244-9851](tel:814-244-9851).

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**Sunday School has begun for Pre-K through 8th grade:** "Mount Calvary Kid's Crew" is our program for Pre-K and up that gathers at 8:30am in Sander Hall with Pastor Jonathan. Students focus on a bible story and have an activity or craft before rejoining their parents during the worship service.

**Childcare is now available during Sunday morning worship:** Hannah Salamon is a Richland Learning Center staff member who will be joining us each Sunday along with Pastor Jonathan and other volunteers to provide childcare for infants through age 5. For the time being, drop-off for this service will take place in Sander Hall. Speak with Pastor Jonathan for more information.

**Jr. High & Sr. High School Student Activity - Saturday, December 4th.** After the 5:30 p.m. worship service, there will be a youth activity for junior high and senior high students. We'll have dinner, a few activities, and a service project and come up with ideas for more activities in the new year. RSVP to Pastor Jonathan!

**Parent's Night Out – December 17th:** Need to finish your Christmas shopping? Or maybe you're ahead of the game and just need a bit of time to wrap gifts! OR, maybe you just need a night away from the kids. Friday, December 17th, Mount Calvary will be holding a "parent's night out." Drop your preschool, elementary, and middle-school-aged kids off at the church beginning at 5:30 p.m., adult chaperones and senior high youth will take care of the rest! We'll treat them to pizza, a movie, and snacks while you take care of whatever needs done. Contact Pastor Jonathan to sign up!

**Christmas Pageant – December 19th:** Mount Calvary's Youth Christmas Pageant will take place Sunday, December 19th during the regular 8:45 a.m. worship service. Preschool and elementary-aged youth will learn their parts the preceeding two weeks (December 5th & 12th) during the Mount Calvary Kid's Crew Sunday School time. If you would like your child to participate, please make sure to bring them to Sander Hall by 8:30 a.m. on the 5th, 12th, & 19th!

**Pastor Jonathan LOVES to get out and see our Mount Calvary youth in action doing the things they enjoy!** Be sure to share your schedules for sports, concerts, recitals, etc. You never know where he might show up!

Pastor Jonathan's office hours at Mount Calvary are Mondays & Wednesdays, 10am-3pm. He is available outside of those hours via email ([RevJonoAdams@gmail.com](mailto:RevJonoAdams@gmail.com)), cellphone (412-817-6704), or Facebook.

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### **Giving Tree**

The November collection will be donated to the Nardecchia Spay and Neuter Fund.

The December donations will be given to The Helping Hands Mission in Portage.

Thank you for your continued support!

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### **Family Kitchen**

Mt. Calvary will be volunteering at the Family Kitchen on Sunday, December 5th from 11-1. It will be take-out only, so the responsibilities only include packaging food, distributing the food out the door, and assisting with cleaning the dishes. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Mike Kozak at 244-6880. Thank you!

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### **Salvation Army Red Kettle Collection**

Mt. Calvary will be assisting The Salvation Army with their Red Kettle Collection again this year. We are scheduled to be at Market Basket on Saturday, December 11th from 10-6. If you would like to sign up for an hour block of time, a sign-up sheet will be in the narthex. Thank you!

### **Backyard Ministries' Socks and Toy Collection**

We will be collecting socks and toys again this Christmas for the children of Coopersdale. There are more bags than we had for the hat and glove collection because one of their providers was not able to assist this year. Mt. Calvary, along with another congregation, offered to take the extra bags. Please take a labeled bag or bags in the narthex and return it filled with a pack of socks and a \$1 toy to the bin before December 22nd. All items will be picked up on Thursday, December 23rd.

Thank you for your continued support!

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### **Christmas Poinsettias**

We are taking orders for Christmas Poinsettias. Each medium-sized plant is \$17.00. Envelopes will be available in the church or call Terrie at the church office at 814-266-4859. Orders must be in by the week of December 6th. Please call Terrie if you have any questions.

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### **Committee News**

In anticipation of our annual meeting on February 5th, the council appointed a Nominating Committee at its August meeting. The Mutual Ministry Committee will once again fulfill this function with the advice and counsel of Ray Leverknight, who is our only outgoing council person this year. The Nominating Committee has met and identified a number of candidates for our one council vacancy and one vacancy on the Mutual Ministry Committee. Once contacts have been made, the Nominating Committee will eventually announce the results of its efforts. Current members of the Mutual Ministry Committee are Harold Ashcraft, Shirley Sholtis-Glova, Mark Williams, Debbie Thomas, Tom Rohrbaugh, and Joan Bunnell who will be rotating off the committee in 2022.

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### **Annual Report**

In anticipation of our annual meeting on February 5th, Erin Powell will be compiling and editing this year's annual report. If you are a council officer, committee chair, or ministry leader, please email your written report to Erin no later than Friday, January 14th. Erin's email address is [epowell@mt-calvarylutheran.org](mailto:epowell@mt-calvarylutheran.org).

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### **ELCA Good Gifts**

ELCA Good Gifts is a great opportunity to provide critical support to the ministries and programs of the ELCA in nearly 80 countries around the world.

How it works:

- Choose a gift (food, medical care costs, school supplies, etc.)
- Receive a card to share the news of your gift
- Make a difference in someone's life!

Visit [goodgifts.elca.org](http://goodgifts.elca.org) for more information on how to donate!

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### **Birthdays and Anniversaries for the Week: November 28 – December 4, 2021**

**Nov. 28** - Tara Foust

**Nov. 29** - Samantha Cannonie & Tori Sterner

**Nov. 30** - Deborah Ferrin

**Dec. 1** - Cathy Gawlas

**Dec. 2** - Erin Borodach & Alex Palasick

**Dec. 3** - Kelly Costlow, Molly Miller, & Brittany Morgenstern

**Dec. 4** - Angela Meyers

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**Remember those that prayer has been requested for:**

Joe Miller & Family, Jennifer & Ryan, Linda & Dick, Dolly & Chiz Palm, Claudia Plows, Maddie Pierce, Gladys Haupt, Joe & Judith Lopez, Maria, Dave, Tom, Lt. Hunter Bergman, and Lt. Dylan Merchant, Harold, Rick, Midge, Shirley, Jennifer, Debbie, Jill McEntee, David, Karen, Lauren, Billy, Barb, Jamie, Sara Solarczyk, Jackie Janak, Jack, Corinne, Joan, Dan, Natalie Zerby, Pastor Scott Custead, Luella Koontz, Al Lindner and Family, Bob, Dawn, Stacy & Josh, Florence Barker, Bob Trotter, Jean Pellon, Bill Layton, Deb Zilch, Bennett, Cassy Sojak, Paul Swartz, Paul Miller, Keith Mayket, Ruth, Pete, Annabelle, and the Teplitz Family.

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**Financial Update**

Mount Calvary continues to do well financially. After nearly two years of a worldwide pandemic, we have been incredibly fortunate. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! What remains for 2021 is to finish with a strong December which has traditionally been our strongest month of the year. As for 2022, maintaining current levels of support and increasing support where and when it's possible will continue to be important. Though we still have many, many blessings to count, we are not as well-endowed as other congregations and the age and population decline of our community continue to present ongoing stewardship challenges. But thanks to you, we've overcome all of this thus far. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

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**Condensed Worship for Sunday, November 21, 2021**

**Prayer of the Day**

Almighty and ever-living God, you anointed your beloved Son to be priest and sovereign forever. Grant that all the people of the earth, now divided by the power of sin, may be united by the glorious and gentle rule of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

**First Reading: 2 Samuel 23:1-7**

<sup>1</sup>Now these are the last words of David:

The oracle of David, son of Jesse,  
the oracle of the man whom God exalted,  
the anointed of the God of Jacob,  
the favorite of the Strong One of Israel:

<sup>2</sup>The spirit of the Lord speaks through me,  
his word is upon my tongue.

<sup>3</sup>The God of Israel has spoken,  
the Rock of Israel has said to me:  
One who rules over people justly,

ruling in the fear of God,  
<sup>4</sup>is like the light of morning,  
like the sun rising on a cloudless morning,  
gleaming from the rain on the grassy land.

<sup>5</sup>Is not my house like this with God?  
For he has made with me an everlasting covenant,  
ordered in all things and secure.  
Will he not cause to prosper  
all my help and my desire?  
<sup>6</sup>But the godless are all like thorns that are thrown away;  
for they cannot be picked up with the hand;  
<sup>7</sup>to touch them one uses an iron bar  
or the shaft of a spear.  
And they are entirely consumed in fire on the spot.

### **Second Reading: Revelation 1:4b-8**

<sup>4b</sup>Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, <sup>5</sup>and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood, <sup>6</sup>and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

<sup>7</sup>Look! He is coming with the clouds;  
every eye will see him,  
even those who pierced him;  
and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail.

So it is to be. Amen.

<sup>8</sup>"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

### **Gospel: John 18:33-37**

<sup>33</sup>Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" <sup>34</sup>Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" <sup>35</sup>Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" <sup>36</sup>Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." <sup>37</sup>Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."

## Sermon by Pastor Scott Klimke

We had at least one Good Samaritan in our community this past week. In the habit of checking in with a neighbor every night, they called and got no answer at the customary hour. They called several more times later; still no answer. Seeing a garage light on, they feared for the worst and EMS personnel were eventually involved. The neighbor unreachable by phone was found in their garage unable to move. But thanks to a good neighbor, recovery is now underway and return home expected in just a couple of days. I guess Jesus knew what he was talking about when he rated the love of neighbor just after the love of God. Following Jesus' lead, someone in our community had one of their best thoughts when they intervened for a neighbor's good this past week.

This is, of course, how it is supposed to go. Jesus is to be our best thought. Jesus is to be our vision. Jesus is to be our light, our wisdom, and our true word. And these words taken from the hymn "Be Thou My Vision," do accord nicely with much of what our appointed biblical readings have to say on this final weekend in another Church year.

If we start with the reading from 2nd Samuel appointed for this year's celebration of Christ the King, King David is lifted up as a role model. The basic idea is the mantle of leadership brings with it the responsibility to set a good example for everybody else. As is the case throughout much of Scripture, our reading from 2nd Samuel asserts King David has done a reasonably good job at this. But he also hasn't been perfect.

This distinction is reserved for Jesus. As compared to David who commits adultery, Jesus is what our reading from Revelation calls the faithful witness. Unlike David, he never betrays his relationship with God or neighbor. To God, he says, "Your will, not mine." To the neighbor that others go so far as to lower through the roof of his house, Jesus says, "Come on in. Let's see what we can do for you." But as he's the faithful witness, our reading from Revelation reminds us that Jesus is also the one whose blood has freed us from our sins. This too draws an important distinction between Jesus and David.

In a moment of weakness, David once shed the blood of another man to acquire that man's wife and to cover his adulterous tracks in the process. Jesus too sheds blood, but his own and what he's after in the spilling of his own blood isn't self-gain, but our gain. As I hope we all know and trust, Jesus shed his blood so that we might be freed from our sins for never-ending relationship with him. Jesus is the role model of all role models. It's why after calling him the ruler of the kings of earth today, Revelation will go on to call Jesus "King of kings and Lord of lords." Not only is Jesus more powerful than any other king or Lord, he's also far more faithful than any other king or lord. He's the perfect example. He's to be our best thought.

When Jesus is our best thought, we remember Jesus' Parable of the Good Samaritan as someone did this past week when she didn't pass by the unanswered phone calls that raised concern about a neighbor. When Jesus is our best thought, we do what members of our women's group did this past week. Through the donation of a needed wheelchair, we help others cope with mobility concerns as Jesus did when he healed the paralytic once lowered through his roof. But finding our best thoughts in Jesus doesn't just involve the love of neighbor; the love of what we can more broadly call community, country, and creation. It also involves the love of Church.



After all, when Jesus is your best thought, you remember that in addition to championing the love of neighbor he also gave us a new commandment. It was the commandment to love one another as he first loved us. Unlike the Golden Rule, the commandment that calls us to love of neighbor, this new commandment wasn't spoken in public. It was spoken in private; addressed to church people like us. When we understand this, we understand that we are the "one another" we are to love as Christ first loved us and such love certainly involves self-sacrifice and personal struggle when its inspiration is the One who died on a cross so we might be freed from our sins. When sin tempts us to reserve our best for self or to replace our best with our worst, we are to give our best instead. Giving our best and letting Jesus do the rest, we are to build each other and this body up; making the overall health of this faith community another one of our primary concerns in life. When we were confirmed as four young adults will be this weekend, we pledged to do this very thing and I do think our confirmands can make contributions to our wellbeing as a faith community.

To start with Kaiden Kunkle, he may end up being an evangelist. Evangelists carry the Good News to where it needs to go and then share the Good News in words that are both personal and faithful. Kaiden once engaged all of those in confirmation with his personal, but highly faithful and engaging telling of how Jesus beat the devil at his game. Kaiden's also someone who doesn't turn away from those who are struggling, but instead accompanies them through their struggles. This is what evangelists do. In ways and words that are as personal as they are faithful, they take themselves and the Good News to people and places of need.

As for Nathaniel Mayket, he may be our next St. Paul. This would undoubtedly make his grandfather Paul proud, but it would also find him making space in the Church for more than the usual suspects. St. Paul once made room for non-Jews like us and for people of every imaginable spiritual gift. This reminds me of Nathaniel because he never tries to be anybody else. He's himself all the way and that includes being a Christian. I have fond memories of seeing Nathaniel's faith and stubborn individuality come together at places like Sequanota. As it may very well prove to be for others, it was a reminder for me that just as St. Paul wrote, "Each has been given the manifestation of the Holy Spirit for the common good."

Turning to Sunniva Palowski now, she may one day become a physician who reminds us of the Great Physician Jesus Christ. But even if the future finds her in another vocation, Sunniva will likely be reminding us of the value of tradition. When they do their job well, this is what both scribes and priests do. By devoting their lives and ministries to old and established things, they remind us that we don't have to reinvent the wheel every two seconds; that much of what has gone before us is still A-okay. This is Sunniva Pawlowski. In her love for classic things like family, school, and church, Sunniva keeps drawing us back to the tried and the true.

And finally, there's Logan Punako. The spiritual growth he has exhibited in the last year has been phenomenal. If he keeps growing as he has, he may very well exceed the seed in Jesus' parable that returns a hundredfold. But even the spiritual growth levels off a bit, Logan's probably already got what it takes to be a prophet in Christ's Church. If scribes and priests remind us of the value of tradition, prophets remind us of how tradition has not yet lived up to all of God's original intentions for the Church. Logan is like this. He's very traditional in some ways, but he's also a very good student of life in our sinful and broken world. Much to his credit, he's got an eye and a heart for those who have been hurt or left out more than the rest of us. Good for him. I'm proud to call him a sibling in Christ and the

same holds true for Sunniva, Nathaniel, and Kaiden. May we now join them, as they join us, in the shared work of making Jesus our best thought through the love of God embodied by both our care for community and in our care for the Church. Amen!

### **Prayers of Intercession**

Eternal God, you hold firm amid the changes of this world. Hear us now as we pray for the church, the world, and everyone in need.

God, you sent your Son Jesus to testify to the truth. We pray for preachers, missionaries, evangelists, and teachers who carry your forgiveness and love to the world. Fill their words and actions with compassion and kindness so that your truth will shine. God, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

God, you sent your Son Jesus to liberate all of creation. We pray for all living things longing for the freedom to flourish, from ancient trees and wild grasses to endangered animals and rare insects. Give human beings compassionate hearts to care for them. God, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

God, you sent your Son Jesus to lead us into the way of peace. Direct the members of international alliances in choosing a nonviolent path toward the future. Give them the humility and wisdom to make just decisions to benefit all. God, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

God, you sent your Son Jesus to make us into your own people, set free to serve you. We pray for people who serve the well-being of others, especially ministries in our community (local social ministries or agencies may be named). Renew them in their work. God, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

God, you sent your Son Jesus to rule in all times and places. We pray for the friends of our congregation who are unable to join our worship in person and for all who are sick and suffering (especially). Join their prayers with ours and unite them with us in the body of Christ. God, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

God, you sent your Son Jesus to be our beginning and our ending. We give thanks for those whose lives have given us a glimpse of Jesus' reign of justice and peace. Empower us to join their witness. God, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

God our hope and strength, we entrust to you all for whom we pray. Remain with us always, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

**Amen.**

### **Blessing**

God, creator of all things, speaking reformation into being: Jesus Christ, savior of the world, raising the dead; Holy Spirit, living voice, calling and enlightening the church: Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**